

A CRITIQUE OF THE CALVARY BAPTIST SEMINARY BIBLE TRANSLATION SEMINAR

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The following is by Pastor Doug Hammett of Emmaus, Pennsylvania:

As I had written before I left for Europe I attended the National Leadership Conference, Coping with the Issues of the Next Generation of Fundamentalism, sponsored by Calvary Baptist Seminary in Lansdale, Pa. Feb. 27-Mar. 1, 1996. Here is a brief review of the sessions on the Bible issue on Thursday.

"I see no reason to teach children to memorize a verse of scripture when they don't understand what it means" ... "How does language enable communication to take place?...Is it the words that are spoken? Or the meaning that words convey? ...the message is the meaning." Charles McLain, Calvary Baptist Seminary, Lansdale, Pa. He went on to espouse nothing more than dynamic equivalency, though he did not use the term.

God says: "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Deut. 6:7 I taught my kids to hide God's word in their heart, and it worked even when they did not understand it.

"the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63

"But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." 1 Pet. 1:25 It seems the words were important to the Lord. By the way, how can you transmit meanings if not in the right words? Sounds like the argument of a dynamic inspiration theory to me.

"I am eclectic in my methodology"..."there is no question that the 66 autographs, which comprise the totality of the Bible, are the inspired Word from God. They were given without error and they did not suffer from any omission. However, the same cannot be said for any extant Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek manuscript since no two manuscripts agree exactly with each other." ..."on some occasions the translation of the KJV is clearly wrong."..."It must be recognized that the usual argument defending a 'divine preservation' of one specific text is not consistent with the evidence. No English text including the KJV is perfect and none can be called 'inspired'. This is also true of all extant Greek manuscripts and all Greek New Testaments."..."should we not investigate whether we are clearly communicating God's truth in written form to this generation?"...A lack of comprehension of God's message results in a lack of growth in 'grace' and growth in fundamentalist churches. Many Christians do not read their

Bibles. Dare we consider the possibility that they cannot understand what they are supposed to read?" Gordon Lovik, Calvary Baptist Seminary, Lansdale, Pa.

God says: "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." Psa. 12:6 Eclecticism leaves God's Word up to the translator, not God. Either it is pure or it is not. Which is it?

"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." Mark 13:31 If there is not a perfect Bible in Greek, English or any other language then what did Jesus mean?

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14 I think it is better to blame the lack of comprehension on our sinful hearts than on God's job of preservation.

"Pastors views of translation are often unfortunate"... "If a man does not have any more than a Masters Degree he has no business translating from the original languages." emphasis on interpreting the scriptures... "Thank God for Augustine. Without him you and I would have lost the way of salvation by grace." David Burggraff, Calvary Baptist Seminary, Lansdale, Pa.

God says: "That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Mat. 16:18 Can you have a true church without the gospel? Did the gospel really depend on one man? Does this mean most of our faithful men of God are really not qualified to stand in the pulpit then unless they have been to the right seminaries. I think some seminary professors views of translations are often unfortunate. The apostles were accused of being ignorant and unlearned, though I think they were quite wise. I would like to follow their example as much as I can rather than seminary professors.

"KJV people use rhetoric and not reality."... "David Cloud in his book, For Love of the Bible, takes shots at strong Fundamentalist schools."... "We need to make a distinction between the best translations and others."... "It is hilarious to say, 'God has used the KJV for 300 years so we should use it'."... In ridiculing those who reject the NIV he said, "Do we really evaluate a translation by a lesbian who set on the translation committee?"... "This fight needs to take place at some level. I hope it takes place at an intelligent level."... "If I know a school uses the Textus Receptus I will not recommend it!" David Doran, Detroit Baptist Seminary

At least Mr. Doran came out and said what he means. Fundamentalist schools by his definition are those that do NOT use the TR, they approve of lesbians on translation committees because of scholarship, and they do not care what God has done in the past, they will devise a new plan more to their own liking. I do not and cannot accept that as orthodoxy, sorry.

"In anthropology we start with perfect people and go down hill. In ecclesiology we start with a perfect church and go down hill. In the Bible we start with a perfect Bible and go down hill."..."Can we speak of our Bibles today as inspired? In the technical sense, we cannot."...even with errors we can understand what the writers meant."..."The preservation of the Word of God is perfectly accomplished by God in heaven. The preservation of God's Word on earth has been committed to people...God anticipated the possibility of failure on man's part in accurately preserving the autographs."..."David Cloud loves to argue the preservation of the Bible by the priesthood of believers but you have to stretch the truth to argue this!"..."God could have preserved his word but history proves he did not!"... Larry Oates, Maranatha Baptist College, Wisconsin

God says: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. 5:26-27 Since when was the church perfect? Judas was a member and not even saved! I thought the church was going to be presented spotless in glory.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" 2 Tim. 3:16 Did Timothy have the original? What good is a Bible that we have to die to see what it says? A little late to help don't you think?

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." 1 Pet. 1:23-25 God says his Word has been preserved. I think I will take God's Word for it.

The issue here is not even being addressed! The issue is not "do we have an English translation." The issue is "did God preserve his word in a form for men to read it?" I say yes! The scriptures say yes! My job then becomes to find out where it is. I may have a discussion with men who do not agree with my conclusions as to where it is to be found and we will be able to walk away friends if we at least agree God HAS a Bible and He HAS it somewhere on earth for man. If however a man says God does NOT have a Bible, then we must part company. That is what Lansdale has done. No anger, slander, or character assassination meant, just the facts.

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O TIMOTHY EDITOR: It appears to me that there are an increasing number of would-be scholars in Fundamentalist and Fundamental Baptist circles who will not accept a man as an intellectual equal unless he believes there are mistakes in the Authorized Version. To be recognized as a scholarly Bible believer today you must accept their contention that the AV has

errors. I realize I am only a simple-minded hillbilly, but I am convinced that this persistent claim by the "scholars" about alleged errors in the God-honored English Bible causes thinking men and women to have doubts about the dependability of their Bible. I am not opposed to scholarship. There is no premium on ignorance. But we don't need the worldly form of scholarship whereby the supposed Fundamentalist follows the New-Evangelicals and the Modernists down the road of unbelief. We need a genuine believing scholarship founded upon the Truth of the Scriptures. Speaking of scholarship, I praise God for Edward F. Hills. He had a doctorate in New Testament textual criticism from Harvard. How is that for scholarship! He did not set God's people out on a search for the pure Word of God scattered somewhere among all of the texts and translations. He said that was the way of unbelief. He did not set God's people's hope upon the opinions of some scholar or lexicographer. He encouraged God's people to trust in God and in His promises of preservation. He encouraged God's people to depend wholly upon the Bible God has preserved and which can be traced through history: the Authorized Version in English and the Received Text upon which it is founded. That's the type of scholarship I am following.